SOUTH AFRICAN RADIO LEAGUE NEWS FOR SUNDAY 7 FEBRUARY 2021

Good morning and welcome to the weekly news bulletin of the South African Radio League read by ..... [your name, call sign and QTH]

The South African Radio League broadcasts a news bulletin each Sunday in Afrikaans and in English at 08:15 and 08:30 Central African Time respectively on HF and various VHF and UHF repeaters around the country. The bulletin is relayed on Echolink by Johan, ZS6JPL. The audio bulletins can be downloaded from the League website at www.sarl.org.za while the text bulletin can be downloaded from https://sarlnewsbulletin.wordpress.com/. To join the Mailchimp bulletin mailing list, send an e-mail to the SARL Secretary.

In the news today:

THE AWA CW ACTIVITY DAY THIS AFTERNOON

CW CENSUS SOUTH AFRICA

and

AMATEUR RADIO ANOMALY FOLLOWING SPACEWALK BEING INVESTIGATED

Stay tuned for more information on these and other interesting news items.

THE AWA CW ACTIVITY DAY THIS AFTERNOON

The aim of the Antique Wireless Association's CW Activity Day is for participants to contact as many amateurs as possible on the 20, 40 and 80 m amateur bands from 13:00 - 15:00 UTC (15:00 to 17:00 CAT) this afternoon. Activity is on 14 000 to 14 060 kHz; 7 000 to 7 040 kHz and 3 510 to 3 560 kHz. You can participate as a Single Operator All Band, Low Power (maximum 100 W); Single Operator All Band, QRP (maximum 5 W); Single Operator Single Band, Low Power (maximum 100 W) or Single operator Single band, QRP (maximum 5 W).

The exchange is an RST report, your name and your Grid locator. You score 1 point for low power and 2 points for QRP. Submit your log sheets by 23:59 CAT on Friday 12 February 2021 to andyzs6ady@vodamail.co.za. Turn to page 99 of the 2021 Blue Book for the rules.

THE VHF/UHF VIRTUAL WORKSHOP ON 20 FEBRUARY

The SARL and AMSATSA will join forces on Saturday 20 February 2021 to

present a virtual VHF/UHF workshop using the BlueJeans platform. The workshop will run from 10:00 - 13:00 CAT followed by an open discussion on how amateur radio contributes to technology. Attendance at the workshop will be free for SARL and AMSATSA members and R50 for non-members. Registration details and the programme are available on the SARL and AMSATSA websites.

The programme includes the Next Generation 2 Metre Beacons, Complexity of Repeater Systems from a technical perspective, the design of the AMSAT SA dual band Yagi and its performance, and VHF/UHF dongles for SDR operation.

CW CENSUS SOUTH AFRICA

Michael, ZS6MSW says that as of 31 January 2021, we have a growing population of CW operators. We have a count of 61 amateurs who are regularly on CW within the Republic of South Africa. His aim is to have the call signs and names published in a SARL newsletter in April this year, to begin an historic growth pattern, with which we can monitor our significance. It will be a bi-annual census with a cut-off date on 1 April 2021 as the first half.

The Long Island CW Club in the USA has taken a keen interest in our development as a CW country and have asked if he would send them a copy when published. So just a reminder, if you use a KEY to communicate regularly on CW and would like your name and call sign be published as part of an ongoing project you are reminded to e-mail him at zs6msw@gmail.com.

You are listening to a news bulletin of the South African Radio League.

ARISS AND PARTNERS INVESTIGATING AMATEUR RADIO ANOMALY FOLLOWING SPACEWALK

Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) and its partners are troubleshooting what is keeping the NA1SS amateur station off the air. ARISS became aware of the problem after an attempted contact with a school in Wyoming, between ON4ISS on Earth and astronaut Mike Hopkins, KF5LJG at NA1SS, had to abort when no downlink signal was heard. ARISS has determined that the problem is not with the radio equipment on board the ISS Columbus module.

ARISS-International Chair Frank Bauer, KA3HDO, explained that during a 27 January spacewalk to install exterior cabling on the ISS Columbus module, the coax feed line installed 11 years ago was replaced with another built by the European Space Agency (ESA) and Airbus. It included two additional RF connectors to support the Bartolomeo payload-hosting platform installed last spring on Columbus.

"On 26 January, prior to the EVA [extravehicular activity], our Columbus next-generation radio system was shut off and the ISS-internal coaxial cable to the antenna was disconnected from the ARISS radio as a safety precaution for the EVA," Bauer said. "During the spacewalk, an external four-connector coax feed line replaced one with two RF connections. This change was made to allow ESA

to connect ARISS and three additional customers to Bartolomeo, as compared to ARISS and one additional RF customer," Bauer explained.

With the spacewalk completed, the ISS crew restarted the ISS amateur radio station on 28 January, but no voice repeater or automatic packet repeater system (APRS) downlink reports were heard and no downlink signal was heard during an attempted scheduled school contact either. Bauer said that because the exterior cable is not an ARISS cable, ARISS is working with ESA and NASA on a way forward. "NASA has opened a Payload Anomaly Report on this issue. We have talked to both the NASA and ESA representatives," Bauer said.

THE RESULTS OF THE SUMMER QRP CONTEST

Nine logs were received for the Summer QRP Contest held on Saturday 23 January. The full results are published in HF Happenings 935.

1st Kobus Boshoff, ZS6BOS - 396 points - Ultra-light station

2nd Phillip van Tonder, ZS6PVT - 250 points - Portable station

3rd Danie Schnetler, ZS6DPS - 220 points - Portable station

PROPAGATION REPORT

Hannes Coetzee, ZS6BZP, reports that the solar activity is expected to be at low levels. There are currently no sunspot regions visible and no solar flaring is expected. If you want to do your own frequency predictions, the expected effective sunspot number for the week will be around one. The 15 to 30 m bands may provide some DX fun. Please visit the website spaceweather.sansa.org.za for further information.

Finally, a diary of some upcoming events:

Today – the AWA CW Activity Day

8 February – the West Rand ARC meeting

13 February - World Radio Day

13 and 14 February – the CQ WPX RTTY and the PACC contests

14 February – Valentine's Day

15 February – the Provincial schools open

16 February – the PEARS and Border ARC meetings

20 February – the SARL and AMSAT SA VHF/UHF virtual Workshop; the Highway and Magalies ARC meetings

20 and 21 February – the ARRL DX CW Contest

To conclude our bulletin, a recap of our main news story:

The AWA CW Activity Day with activity on 20, 40 and 80 metres will be on the air from 13:00 - 15:00 UTC (15:00 to 17:00 CAT) this afternoon. The exchange is an RST report, your name and your Grid locator. Turn to page 99 of the 2021 Blue Book for the rules.

This concludes our bulletin for this morning.

We invite clubs and individuals to submit news items of interest to radio amateurs and shortwave listeners, in both English and Afrikaans, if possible, by following the News Inbox link on the South African Radio League web page. News items to include in the bulletin should reach the news team no later than the Thursday preceding the bulletin date.

You are welcome to join us every Sunday morning for the weekly radio program, Amateur Radio Today at 10:00 CAT. The program can be heard on VHF and UHF repeaters countrywide and on 7 082 kHz lower side-band by courtesy of Louis, ZS5LP. A rebroadcast by Andy, ZS6ADY, can be heard on Monday evenings at 19:30 CAT on 3 620 kHz.

We welcome your signal reports, comments and suggestions; please send these by e-mail to artoday@sarl.org.za.

You have listened to a news bulletin compiled by Dennis Green, ZS4BS, edited by Dave Reece, ZS1DFR and read by .....

From the news team, best wishes for the week ahead.